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SUBJECT: SOUTHERN NIGERIA: SEPTEMBER ECONOMIC BRIEFS

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Government of Nigeria (GON) is in the process of acquiring instrument landing systems and visibility equipment for the nation's airports. Nigeria's education crisis continues to hamper the efforts of U.S. companies to find staff. A DHL Boeing 727 overshot the runway at Lagos' main airport. Bonny Island Liquid Natural Gas (LNG), slated to be the world's largest LNG plant, dismissed 500 workers involved in violence at the plant construction site. End Summary.

Nigerian Government Plans to Buy NAVAIDS

¶2. (U) The Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) will acquire new visibility and instrument landing systems (ILS) worth 18 million euros. NAMA plans to deploy 10 Doppler VHF omni-directional ranging (DVORs) and 10 ILS systems to enhance air safety. NAMA is still exploring financing options for this equipment. Currently, most domestic airports in Nigeria, including those that routinely experience heavy or unpredictable weather, are not equipped to allow pilots to make instrument landings.

Education Crisis Hampers U.S. Company Hiring

¶3. (U) Ms. Juliet Anammah, of Accenture accounting, told a September meeting of the American Business Council in Lagos that Nigeria's education crisis continues to hamper the efforts of U.S. businesses in Lagos to find sufficient numbers of good employees. Citing statistics provided by the Minister of Education, Anammah said that Nigeria's 55,346 primary and secondary schools can only accommodate 23.2 million out of a total 55.8 million students of primary and secondary school age. Universities in Nigeria only have the capacity to admit 147,000 students per year. Technical training is inadequate, especially in the fastest-growing sectors of the economy such as telecommunications, oil and gas and construction.

DHL Aircraft in Minor Accident at Lagos Airport

¶4. (U) A DHL Boeing 727 overshot the domestic runway at Murtala Mohammed International Airport on 8 September. Poor visibility due to heavy rains was blamed for the accident, in which there were no injuries. In-bound and out-bound flights were delayed for several days while airport management arranged to have the aircraft towed off the runway.

Bonny Dismissals Peaceful

15. (SBU) Bonny Island Liquid Natural Gas managers dismissed 500 Nigerian employees during the month of September; the dismissals were conducted without unrest. The dismissed employees had been involved in threats and assaults against other employees, or had participated in rioting which stopped construction on the plant August 19. In anticipation of retaliatory unrest, the plant alerted worker union representatives, local, state and federal government officials and chiefs of local communities, and augmented site security with local police. U.S. companies are engaged in engineering and construction on the plant, which will be the largest LNG plant in the world upon completion.
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